GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
WATER RESOURCES
LOK SABHA

STARRED QUESTION NO:341
ANSWERED ON:21.08.2006
DECLINE IN GROUND WATER LEVEL
Khan Shri Sunil;Owaisi Shri Asaduddin

Will the Minister of WATER RESOURCES be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Central Ground Water Board (CGWB) in association with the concerned State Governments makes periodical assessment of the availability of ground water in the country;

(b) if so, whether the latest assessment made in this regard has shown that the level of ground water is depleting year after year in almost every State;

(c) if so, the comparative figures of the last three assessments made in this regard, State-wise;

(d) whether some remedial steps have been proposed by CGWB to the States to raise the ground water table at the requisite level; and

(e) if so, the details thereof and the strategy chalked out in consultation with the States in regard thereto?

Answer

THE MINISTER OF WATER RESOURCES (PROF. SAIF-UD-DIN SOZ)

(a) to (e) A Statement is laid on the Table of the House.

STATEMENT REFERRED TO IN REPLY OF PARTS (a) TO (e) OF LOK SABHA STARRED QUESTION NO.341 FOR REPLY ON 21.08.2006 REGARDING DECLINE IN GROUND WATER LEVEL.

(a) Yes, Sir. Assessment of availability of ground water in the country has been done in 1995 and 2004.

(b) The latest assessment carried out in 2004 has shown that there has been significant decline in ground water level in some pockets of various States except in the North-Eastern States and in the States of Goa, Bihar, Jharkhand, Orissa, West Bengal, Sikkim, Himachal Pradesh and Jammu & Kashmir.

(c) The State-wise comparison of above assessments is given in Annexure.

(d)&(e) `Water` being a State subject, it is primarily the responsibility of the State Governments to take steps to raise ground water levels. However, the Union Government/CGWB have also taken several remedial steps in this regard which inter-alia include the following:-

(i) A report titled `Master Plan for Artificial Recharge to Ground Water` has been prepared which has identified a total of 4.5 lakh sq. km. area in the country needing artificial recharge of ground water. The document has been circulated to all the States/ UTs for appropriate action.

(ii) The CGWB has circulated Manual/ Guide on techniques of Artificial Recharge to Ground Water to the States/ Union Territories to enable them to formulate area specific artificial recharge schemes to check the declining trend of ground water levels.

(iii) CGWB promotes rain water harvesting by conducting mass awareness/ training programmes and provides technical guidance to various Government and Non-Government agencies.

(iv) A demonstrative scheme on `Rain Water Harvesting and Artificial Recharge to Ground Water` has been taken up by the CGWB at a total cost of Rs. 12 crore during the year 2006-07 in 13 identified areas of the States of Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka, Madhya Pradesh and Tamil Nadu.

(v) Ministry of Water Resources has circulated a Model Bill to `Regulate and Control the Development and Management of Ground Water` to the States/Union Territories. The Model Bill has a separate chapter on `Rain Water Harvesting for Ground Water Recharge`.

(vi) The Union Government has constituted `Artificial Recharge of Ground Water Advisory Council` under the Chairmanship of Union Minister for Water Resources in the Ministry of Water Resources, which has representation from various Ministries/Departments concerned with rain water harvesting, States/UTs, Financial Institutions, Industries/ Public Undertakings as well as NGOs and renowned Subject Experts.

(vii) The Central Ground Water Authority(CGWA) has directed the Chief Secretaries of the concerned States to take all measures to adopt artificial recharge to ground water/ promote rain water harvesting in all the Over-exploited areas falling under their jurisdiction and ensure inclusion of roof top rain water harvesting in the building bye-laws.

(viii) CGWA has notified 20 severely Critical/ Over-exploited areas in the country for regulation of ground water development and management. The CGWA is also regulating development of ground water by new industries/ projects in all Over-exploited/ Critical/ Semi-critical areas.